

Indonesia Country Report

May 2023

West Papuans have been the targets of oppression since Papua was integrated into Indonesia in the 1960s after a widely criticised referendum known as the Act of Free Choice. The referendum, often dubbed "the Act of No Choice," led to 53 years of repression of West Papuans by Indonesia.

To crush both armed and peaceful Papuan pro-independence groups, Indonesian security forces have violently carried out unlawful killings, torture, rape, and enforced disappearances.

In August 2019, Indonesian vigilante mobs in Surabaya surrounded the boarding house of Papuan university students and hurled racial slurs at them, calling them "monkeys," "pigs," and "dogs." Several students were detained. At least 33 people were killed, and 8,000 Papuans were displaced as a result of the protests and riots that followed this incident.

In August 2022, residents of Iwaka village, outside the town of Timika, discovered the mutilated bodies of four indigenous Papuans. Six Indonesian soldiers were arrested.

The country's legal system is rife with prejudice and discrimination against Papuans. In December 2022, an Indonesian court acquitted a retired army officer in the December 2014 killings of five Papuans, including four teenagers, in the town of Enarotali, Papua province.

Violence against religious minorities is on the rise. Fundamentalist Islamists target Ahmadiyah and Shia Muslims and Christians. In November 2020, four Christians were killed and had their homes burned down. In September 2021, a mob of Islamists burned down the Ahmadiyah community's mosque in Balai Harapan, West Kalimantan. Thousands of Shia Muslims remain displaced after their village in Madura was razed by a mob of Indonesian Sunni Islamists.

Laws imposing religious discrimination include the Blasphemy Law passed in 1965. It has resulted in members of religious minorities being convicted for statements on social media. In December 2022, the Indonesian parliament passed a new criminal code which criminalises apostasy, extramarital sex, insulting the president, and expressing any opinion that contradicts the Pancasila state ideology.

Due to dehumanization of Papuans, extrajudicial killings and other rights abuses in West Papua, Genocide Watch considers Indonesian West Papua to be at **Stage 4: Dehumanization, Stage 5: Organization, Stage 6: Polarization** and **Stage 8: Persecution**. Due to persecution of religious minorities, Genocide Watch considers Indonesia to be at **Stage 1: Classification, Stage 2: Symbolization, Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 6: Polarization,** and **Stage 8: Persecution. Genocide Watch Recommends:**

- Indonesia must permit unrestricted access for journalists and human rights workers to West Papua.
- The Indonesian government should provide resettlement aid to displaced West Papuans.
- Designation of religion should be removed from Indonesian national ID cards.
- Indonesia should repeal the 1965 Blasphemy Law and the 2006 Decree on Houses of Worship.